

# OUR PLACE WITHIN THE PSYCHOSOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

A JOURNEY FROM THE BIOMEDICAL MODEL TO OPEN DIALOGUE



MSSc Hon Social Psychology, MA Clinical and  
Abnormal Psychology

Open Dialogue Advocate

Mother and carer with lived experience of  
mental illness

SATU BEVERLEY  
Sydney, Australia

beverley.satu@gmail.com



# ANGEL IN THE MIRROR

ROAD TO RECOVERY



LUMI WINTERSON

## Case Study

### Angel in the Mirror: Road to Recovery

- ▶ Recovery is possible
- ▶ Trust in your treatment team is vital
- ▶ Social support network needs to be involved in treatment
- ▶ Stress and anxieties can lead to psychosis and depression
- ▶ Learning positive coping skills makes life easier

▶ [www.lumiwinter.com](http://www.lumiwinter.com)



# Road to Recovery

- ▶ Trust in clinicians and inclusion of social support network as a part of the treatment team are helpful for recovery
- ▶ Anxieties, stress and fears may cumulate to the point that our brain can no longer deal with it rationally
- ▶ Symptoms may be expressions of our frustration and inability to deal rationally with challenges
- ▶ Unsolved difficulties can lead to depression, psychosis, development of mental illness, even suicide



# MANAGING THE PRESURES OF LIVING

- ▶ Everything we experience and learn, habits and skills, good and bad happen through our cognitive processes in relation to and through our interaction with the environment.
- ▶ Noticing and acting promptly on early warning signs from early age onwards may stop mental illness from developing
- ▶ It can be difficult to see the early warning signs if people are blind to them or don't know what to do



# KEYPOINTS IN INTERVENTION

TRUST – In all those around you

HONESTY – Feeling safe enough to disclose to friends/family about what is going on.

NOTICING THE LITTLE THINGS – Little problems can turn into huge ones if not dealt with early

INTEGRATION OF SUPPORTS – Including all support group members in an open way in dealing with the problems at hand.

DEALING WITH WARNING SIGNS – From early childhood to old age, warning signs should be dealt with effectively and taken seriously.





# Why Open Dialogue

1. Focuses on treating causes of mental illness in an attempt to stop mental illness developing
2. Each new case is treated as crisis within 24 hours
3. The social support network is engaged in the treatment team meetings.
4. Continuity of clinicians is vital for establishing trust.
5. Emphasis on psychosocial therapies to teach life skills  
Medication is used minimally ONLY when necessary



# Use of Medication is Limited

- ▶ Medication does not cure the cause of mental illness, only stamp down / hide symptoms allowing the illness to become chronic
- ▶ Medication is always a trial and error.
- ▶ The change from one drug to another can be horrible and may mean long periods in hospital.
- ▶ The side effects can be devastating and radically shorten the life expectancy.







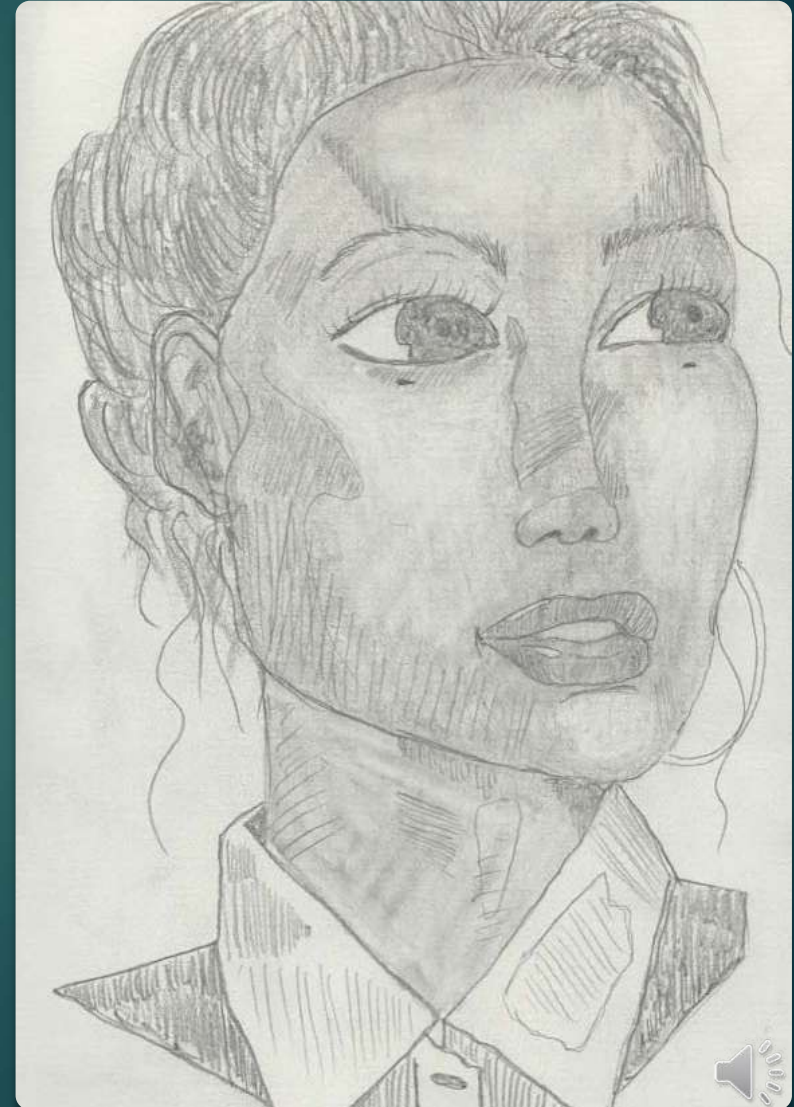
# Management of Lumi's mental health

- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) was introduced
- Open Dialogue principles were adapted to her treatment
- Social support network engaged as part of treatment team
- Transparency in communication and psychosocial therapies added to the Biomedical model being used



# LUMI'S ROAD TO RECOVERY

- Essential elements of Lumi staying alive:
  - Love and hope
  - Belief that things will get better
  - Being accepted unconditionally
  - Finding a hospital where she felt safe
  - Being able to develop trusting relationship with treatment team
  - Trusted clinicians working in partnership with each other and herself
  - Recognising the little things that matter



# PREVENTION

- ▶ Physical causes of psychosis such as a tumour, high fever, lack of sleep, drink or food must be ruled out and rectified before the diagnosis of a mental illness is made.
- ▶ Therapies such as Dialectical Behaviour Therapy should be taught in schools to teach from a young age how to deal with emotions and consequential behaviours.
- ▶ Lumi's hope is that universities will accept her book as recommended reading for new health professionals so that they can understand the illness from a consumer's point of view.







## ► COMMON WARNING SIGNS

- Social Isolation
- Becoming secretive
- Avoiding eye contact
- Irrational ideas as indicators of early psychosis
- Self-harming
- Extreme mood swings
- Lack of self care
- Introversion
- Drug/alcohol abuse
- Impulsivity
- Crying more than usual
- Weight gain or loss
- Changes to eating patterns
- Obsessive behaviours e.g. washing hands



# RESEARCH

'Made in America' - Robert Whitakar 2019

## ► Biomedical model

International group of researchers in 2013 found that recovery rates for schizophrenia patients were 13% before year 1941, and rose to 17% between 1941 – 1975, then dropped to 10% in 1976 - 1995 and down to 6% from 1996 onwards.

## ► Open Dialogue

Research by Jaakko Seikkula and Birgitta Alakare with Tornio group in their first 5 year research on recovery rates of Open Dialogue came up with superior outcomes. 80% of their first episode patients were asymptomatic, functioning well (working, in school, looking for employment), 20% were on government disability, 67% had never been exposed to antipsychotics, 13% had used them for a time and 20% took drugs regularly.

